

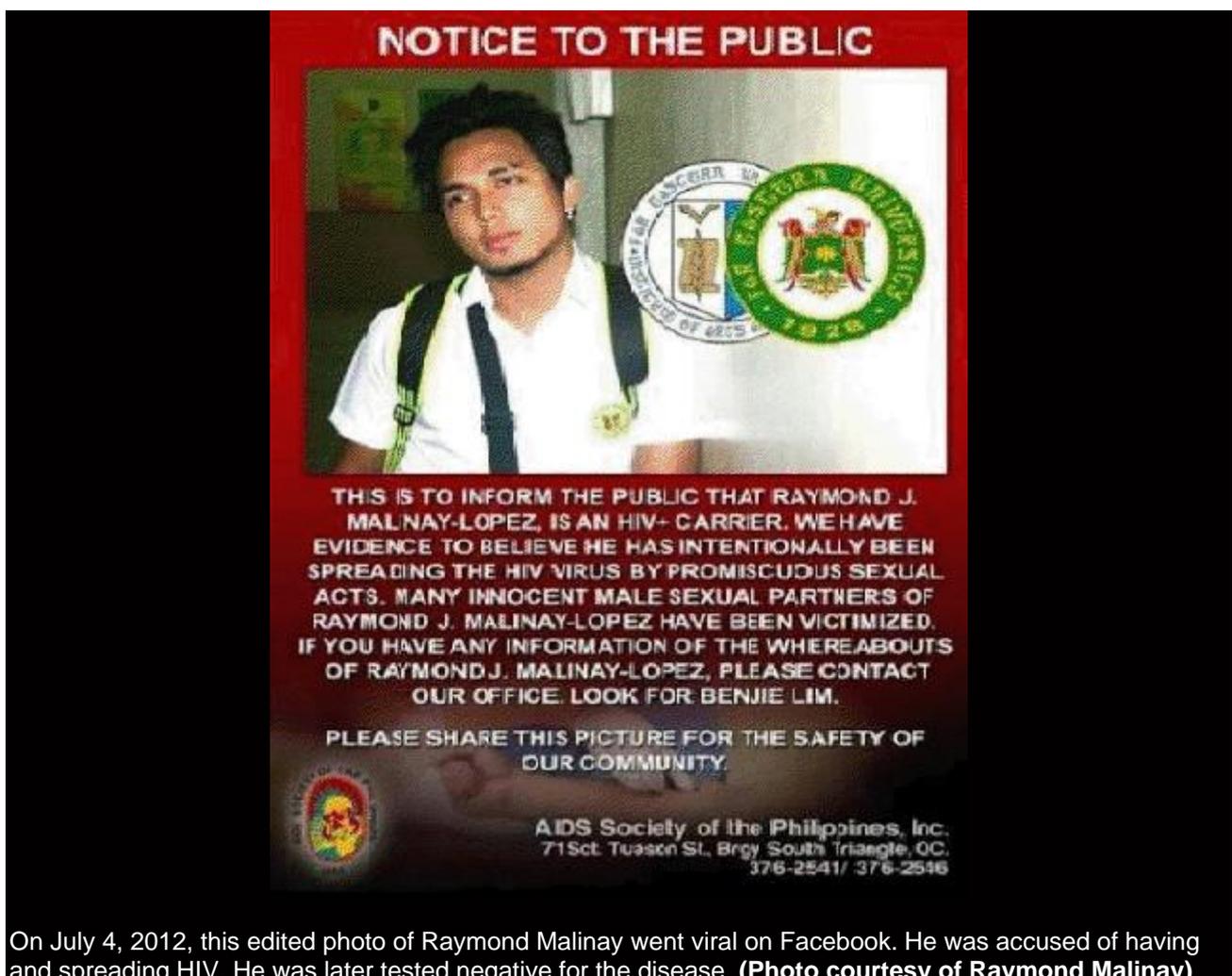
# Cyberbullying: A victim's tale of lies and the madness of crowds

Victoria Camille Tulad September 15, 2012 3:09pm

In the Philippines, where virtually everyone who has an Internet connection is on Facebook, it becomes all too easy to change —and even ruin— peoples' lives without a moment's hesitation.

Just like millions of other Pinoys, 27-year-old Raymond Malinay is a confessed Facebook fanatic: he spends every free minute online updating his status, sharing his thoughts, and liking his friends' posts. He even made his account public to reach more people.

But what Raymond considered nothing more than a tool for entertainment eventually turned out to be the medium for his oppression: he became the victim of a very ugly prank.



On July 4, 2012, this edited photo of Raymond Malinay went viral on Facebook. He was accused of having and spreading HIV. He was later tested negative for the disease. **(Photo courtesy of Raymond Malinay)**

It was the morning of July 4, 2012, recalls Raymond, when he went on Facebook to check rumors that an anonymous user had accused him of having HIV. That same user even grabbed Raymond's picture from one of his albums, edited it, and put a supposed statement from the AIDS Society of the Philippines saying he was wanted for spreading the deadly disease.

“I really don’t know where the issue came from, I don’t have enemies... I’m not gay,” says Raymond. “That picture spread really fast; in just two days it got 4,000 shares and reached other countries like India and the USA.”

### Crowd madness: ‘You will burn in hell’

“The worst remark I got was ‘I hope you die, your body will burn in hell,’” he added.

The day he saw the malicious pictures and comments, Raymond did not attend class at his university in Manila, where he studies Mass Communication as a third-year student.

“I admit I got depressed. Why would that happen to me when I didn’t do anything to anyone? I didn’t know what to do, it was too much,” Raymond says.

“I was really traumatized. It’s hard enough to get criticized by your friends but this is nationwide, you’ll really get hurt.”



Netizens immediately condemned Raymond without any verification of the truth. (Screengrabs courtesy of Raymond Malinay)

## Strangers, loved ones show support

After seclusion at home, Raymond decided to attend school the next day. Riding the LRT wasn't a breeze, though, since other students who went to colleges in the University belt recognized him.

"When I entered the LRT, there were a lot who looked at me disdainfully," he says. "I knew they whispered to each other, and I knew it was about me."

Despite getting cyber bullied, Raymond gathered strength from his friends and family, who backed him up all the way.

GMA News was able to talk to his parents, friends, and teachers, and they were unanimous in saying that Raymond is good-natured, hard working, smart, and honest.

Despite the multitude of netizens attacking Raymond, he also received consolation from strangers who believed his account of the story.

## False accusations, a cruel prank

Immediately after the pictures came out, Raymond went to a hospital affiliated with the AIDS Society of the Philippines to dispute the allegations and get an HIV test.

As expected, the test turned out to be negative. Raymond then had proof that he was merely a victim of a cruel prank.

For their part, the AIDS Society of the Philippines issued a disclaimer saying that the organization had nothing to do with the posts.

Raymond J. Malinay-Lopez  
Falsely accused of being HIV positive

Bernardo Social Hygiene Clinic Staff

July 10, 2012  
HIV Test Result: Nonreactive (Negative)  
Bernardo Social Hygiene Clinic  
Cubao, RMHS, Quezon City  
Laboratory No. M3392

Cybercrimes Special Task Force:  
PNP-CIDG, Camp Crame

**STOP** Posting and Sharing False Accusation  
STOP Harassment, STOP Shaming,  
STOP Cyberbullying

Support this Advocate, **SHARE** This to the World.

On July 6, 2012, Raymond Malinay tested negative for HIV. The AIDS Society of the Philippines also categorically stated it had nothing to do with the accusations versus him. (Photo courtesy of Raymond Malinay) M

“As you very well know [the] Aids Society of the Philippines has been in existence for 15 years, and its very adherent to promote human rights confidentiality of issues, patient rights especially on the aspects of HIV and AIDS,” said the organization’s president, Dr. Jose Sescon.

“We have to be responsible with the message or pictures we have posted... there are human rights that needed to be protected,” he emphasized.

### **No Anti Cyber-Bullying Law**

With the upsurge in the number of Facebook users in the country, Buhay party-list Representatives Irwin Tieng and Mariano Michael Velarde saw it fit to introduce House Bill 6116 or the “Anti Cyber-Bullying Act of 2012”, an act which would seek to punish hackers and hear cases of bullying on the internet.

Tieng admits, however, that it is difficult to have their bill passed since not many legislators currently share their view on its importance.

The lack of an anti-cyber bullying law is precisely the reason why, when Raymond went to Camp Crame’s Criminal Investigation Detection Group or CIDG back in July, he was told that the agency had no means of tracking the culprit, and that all they could do was to record his statements.

### **A more dangerous kind of bullying**

According to Pscyhologist Dr. Ali Ng-Gui, cyber bullying is a more dangerous kind of bullying.

“Your typical bullying happens in school or anywhere outside but it stops when you go home. Cyber bullying on the other hand comes inside your home and takes advantage even of younger children,” says Ng-Gui. “The first effect [of cyber bullying] is the fear to speak up, anger, humiliation; the person can become anti-social.”

Ng-Gui says that the best way to address the trauma caused by cyber bullying, is to step out, tell others and surround yourself with people that support you.

### **Think before you click**

From time to time, Raymond still receives biting feedback from people who believe the damaging pictures and posts, but he has learned to put them all aside.

He eventually traced the original post to a certain user named “Shine Siy”, but he still could not be sure if that person was indeed responsible for the posts.

At the moment, he remains hopeful that no one will go through what he had to endure.

“I just thought of the positive side because I felt more loved and cared for,” Raymond says. “I learned that even if you have Facebook you don’t need to broadcast everything about your life. It is very important to be responsible and as they say, to ‘Think before you click’.” —**TJD/HS, GMA News**

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*This story is based on the “E-Bullying” segment of Brigada aired on August 27, 2012 on GMA News TV made by Segment Producer Ayen Bayani, Researcher Winxel Ochoa, Production Assistant Andrew Calla, and Correspondent Victoria Tulad.*

Ref.: <http://www.gmanetwork.com/news/story/274156/scitech/socialmedia/cyberbullying-a-victims-tale-of-lies-and-the-madness-of-crowds>

**Look more here: [www.Bullying.PhilippineChildren.ph](http://www.Bullying.PhilippineChildren.ph) and [www.CyberBullying.Aboutphilippines.ph](http://www.CyberBullying.Aboutphilippines.ph)**